

Abstract

An apparatus for dispensing food articles to a food article receiving container that includes a hopper that defines a primary food article storage location configured to hold the food articles, and an accumulator that defines a secondary food article storage location and is positioned adjacent to the primary food article storage location so as to receive food articles held in the primary storage location. The food article receiving container is positioned generally beneath the accumulator so that food articles moving from the accumulator food article storage location land in the food article receiving container. The apparatus also includes a cooling device and a substantially air-tight seal in order to maintain a predetermined temperature range in the primary food article storage location and the accumulator food article storage location. The apparatus may also include a load/weight sensing/measuring assembly in place of or in addition to the cooling device. The load/weight sensing/measuring assembly is configured to weigh the food articles in the primary food article location and generate a weighed signal.